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South-South cooperation for development

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Summary

The present report has been prepared in response to decision 16/2 of the sixteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. It covers (a) the implementation of the Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries; and (b) the organizational, administrative and financial arrangements of the United Nations Development Programme in support of South-South cooperation. The report highlights the efforts undertaken throughout the United Nations system to respond to the increasing demand by Member States for support to South-South and triangular cooperation efforts. However, it points to the need for greater coordination and coherence among United Nations organizations, funds and programmes to ensure that South-South efforts are as effective as possible.

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I. Introduction

1. The United Nations is increasingly called upon by Member States to support cooperation among developing countries in the wake of increasingly strong links among these countries in trade, investment, development cooperation and other sectors. At the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation held in Nairobi from 1 to 3 December 2009, marking the thirtieth anniversary of the adoption of the Buenos Aires Plan of Action for Promoting and Implementing Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries,[1] Member States called for strengthened support to South-South and triangular cooperation, consistent with earlier mandates dating back to the 1970s. Accordingly, they agreed on the landmark Nairobi outcome document, endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/222. In that document Member States recognized the need for reinvigorated support by the United Nations development system for South-South and triangular cooperation programmes and policies through a multi-stakeholder approach at the global, regional and national levels. It emphasized in particular the role of United Nations agencies and regional commissions in responding to the needs of developing countries for formulating programmes; strengthening capacity development and technical, policy and research support; establishing and supporting South-South centres of excellence; and supporting regional and subregional integration mechanisms and modalities. Member States also encouraged developing countries to enhance national coordination mechanisms so as to improve South-South and triangular cooperation through knowledge-sharing and the exchange of good practices, and to develop country-led systems to evaluate and assess the quality and impact of programmes and improve data collection. In addition, the Nairobi document also acknowledges and reaffirms the 2003 Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC/13/3), which give broad guidance to United Nations organizations and agencies in their efforts to support South-South cooperation. In particular, these guidelines include instructions that cover the mainstreaming of South-South cooperation in agency policies and procedures; financing mechanisms and resource mobilization strategies; and knowledge management and reporting functions, including training, networking and the establishment of South-South focal points.

2. In response, United Nations organizations and agencies have expanded efforts to move from ad hoc initiatives to more systematized support to South-South and triangular cooperation. This is seen particularly in the increased emphasis on the design of policies, strategies and programmes in support of South-South cooperation as well as in the growing wave of support to South-South policy dialogue as part of the core business of many agencies. Furthermore, the increased use of web-based mechanisms for sharing knowledge and experience and for support to southern professional networks and centres of excellence underscore the acknowledgement by the United Nations system of its comparative advantage in knowledge management, particularly that aimed at institutional and human capacity development at the national level. The South-South efforts of developing countries

[1] *Report of the United Nations Conference on Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries, Buenos Aires, 30 August-12 September 1978* (United Nations publication, Sales No. E.78.II.A.11 and corrigendum), chap. I.

towards regional integration are also receiving more support from the United Nations.

3. Despite the significant strides made by organizations, funds and programmes of the United Nations system in meeting the demands of Member States and shoring up their support for South-South initiatives, an analysis of these trends points to a few areas where the system could improve its performance. Of primary importance among the areas for improvement is a need for greater coherence and coordination among agencies in their support for initiatives that benefit a large number of developing countries. Efforts in this vein could include more joint research directed at informed policy formulation; collaborative programming among agencies; increased interactions and peer learning in the development of South-South programmes, strategies and projects; and increased systematization of South-South cooperation in the "Delivering as one" pilot countries.

4. The present report reviews the trends among United Nations organizations, funds and programmes in their support for South-South and triangular cooperation over the 2009-2011 biennium in response to decision 16/2 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation. In highlighting the overall trend, the report provides a number of examples of how United Nations agencies are responding to the increasing demand of Member States for support for their South-South efforts.

II. Implementation of the guidelines for South-South cooperation by the United Nations development system

5. Over the 2009-2011 reporting period, United Nations organizations, funds and programmes stepped up efforts to implement the various mandates specified by the Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries. In this regard, the United Nations system established itself as a powerful broker of South-South development knowledge. Additionally, United Nations agencies created systematic, regularized approaches focusing on human capacity development and institutional capacity-building, using the results of the information technology revolution as the foremost tool of transformation and implementation in South-South development efforts. In particular, these undertakings took the form of support to developing countries in the follow-up to global dialogue forums and deepened efforts at data collection and analysis; the creation of specific policies and programming elements on South-South cooperation, including financial and institutional partnerships for South-South efforts; and support to South-South knowledge networks, centres of excellence and web-based portals and platforms for dissemination of South-South knowledge resources.

A. Mainstreaming South-South cooperation in policies and procedures

6. Recognizing the need for strategic direction and operational guidance, many specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system developed, updated and revised their corporate strategies and policy guidance on South-South cooperation, with the aim of systematically improving the integration of South-South cooperation into their policies and operational programmes.

Accordingly, some began work on detailed operational guidelines to provide practical "how to" approaches and support tools for the integration of South-South perspectives into the design and execution of their programmes, as requested by the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation.

7. Additional efforts were made to integrate South-South cooperation into the main policy strategies and programming documents of agencies, such as the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) Strategic Plan, 2008-2011.[2] Under the Strategic Plan, UNDP South-South cooperation efforts are directed at human and institutional capacity development to contribute towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, using South-South solutions and advancing global partnerships for development. Furthermore, through its lead role in the United Nations Development Group, UNDP was instrumental in including South-South cooperation indicators in the processes of the United Nations Development Action Framework, which guide the work of United Nations country teams in programme countries. UNDP also provided support to the efforts of the Development Operations Coordination Office of the United Nations Development Group towards creating a guidance note on South-South cooperation in regard to aid effectiveness.

8. Similarly, the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA) and the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF) prepared specific strategies and policy guidance on South-South cooperation. The UNFPA strategy enables a systematic adoption of South-South cooperation across the work of the organization, contributing to policy, programme and operational coherence and effectiveness. In the case of the UNICEF guidelines, this tool outlines the approaches and contexts under which various South-South cooperation initiatives are undertaken in order to consolidate and underscore the lessons learned through the experiences of the organization.

9. Additionally, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) produced two strategic documents recognizing South-South cooperation as an integral dimension of its programmes and operations. This refers to the IFAD business model that supports various South-South cooperation initiatives, including regional initiatives aimed at supporting capacity development. This focus is exemplified by the IFAD agreement with the Common Market of the South (MERCOSUR) to support information-sharing and technology transfers to Africa (see E/2011/112, para. 13). UNEP also has plans under way to develop a step-by-step toolkit and operational guidelines to serve as tools for integrating South-South cooperation into the design and execution of capacity-building programmes and projects. These instruments, set to be operational in 2012, are meant to help speed up the integration and coordination of South-South cooperation, as well as serve as agency-wide reference tools for the application of this type of cooperation as a key delivery mechanism for achieving the objectives of the Bali Strategic Plan for Technology Support and Capacity-building.

[2] DP/2007/43. Originally covering the period 2008-2011, in decision 2009/9 the Executive Board extended the time frame of the Plan to run through 2012.

B. Role of the United Nations system in brokering the sharing of knowledge

10. In their support to global dialogue, United Nations organizations have increased their research and analysis of South-South interactions. During the biennium, the United Nations system, including the regional commissions, demonstrated its comparative advantage in support for South-South and triangular cooperation, convening high-level events, forums and conferences at regional and subregional levels and facilitating policy dialogue, forging consensus and monitoring progress in the implementation of various intergovernmental commitments regarding South-South and triangular cooperation. These dialogue forums included the UNICEF high-level meeting on child rights in the Asia-Pacific region in 2010, which produced the Beijing Declaration on South-South Cooperation for Child Rights in the Asia Pacific Region, which set out commitments to advance the rights of nearly 1.2 billion children in the region. During the same period, the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific and the Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean convened meetings on South-South cooperation in their respective regions to discuss various issues, such as the role of South-South cooperation with regard to disability, preparations for the United Nations Conference on Sustainable Development, to be held in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil, from 20 to 22 June 2012, and the development of social and economic indicators for South-South cooperation. The United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) and the United Nations Conference on Trade and Development (UNCTAD) also conducted research and analysis that fed into the various workshops, forums and high-level expert meetings convened to provide a setting for dialogue on critical issues in South-South cooperation. These included the service provided by UNCTAD to the Committee of Participants in the Global System of Trade Preferences, which concluded its third round of negotiations in 2010, establishing greater opportunities for the expansion and diversification of trade among participating countries.

11. As part of the research and analytical work of the specialized agencies, funds and programmes of the United Nations system, a number of influential reports were prepared that highlight the growing promise of South-South and triangular cooperation to support sustainable and equitable development in countries of the South. In 2010, the Small Island Developing States Unit of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, in collaboration with the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation of UNDP, published a comprehensive overview of South-South programmes entitled *SIDS-SIDS Success Stories: An Innovative Partnership in South-South Cooperation*. Similarly, in May 2011, the Economic Commission for Africa, in partnership with the African Union and the African Development Bank, published an issues paper entitled "Harnessing South-South cooperation for financing development in Africa". The UNCTAD *Least Developed Countries Report 2011: The Potential Role of South-South Cooperation for Inclusive and Sustainable Development* highlighted the role of South-South cooperation in supporting inclusive and sustainable development in least developed countries, while its report entitled *South-South Cooperation: Africa and the New Forms of Development Partnership* focused on the new opportunities that South-South cooperation offers for transforming African economies. Similarly, the report produced in May 2011 by the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa entitled *Africa's Cooperation with New and Emerging Development Partners: Options for*

Africa's Development, called for stronger cooperation strategies between Africa and emerging partners to ensure equitable economic development in the continent over the long term.

C. Innovative partnership mechanisms supporting South-South cooperation

12. In addition to creating policy and programming frameworks to regularize South-South cooperation in the work of United Nations agencies, funds and programmes, a significant effort was also made to establish strategic partnerships with major providers of South-South development cooperation. These partnerships were aimed primarily at raising funds to support human and institutional capacity development through transfers of knowledge, technical expertise and development solutions among developing countries.

13. UNDP entered into a number of new strategic partnerships with major providers of South-South development assistance. In 2010, it signed a partnership framework agreement with the Government of Brazil while a memorandum of understanding was signed with the Government of China, both aimed at deepening the relationship between UNDP and these countries, with a focus on South-South cooperation. In addition, a letter of intent was signed with the Government of South Africa during the same year. In March 2011, UNDP entered into a partnership framework agreement with the Government of Turkey to foster global development partnerships, among other provisions.

14. Partnerships between the International Labour Organization (ILO) and the Governments of Brazil, India and South Africa in promoting the Decent Work Agenda are focused on supporting the efforts of Latin American and Caribbean, African and Asian developing countries in promoting decent work and social justice through exchanges of experience and good practices in combating poverty and child labour and fostering social protection and youth employment.

15. The Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations (FAO) has also forged strategic alliances with developing countries to support South-South collaboration, including one with the Government of China in 2009, resulting in a $30 million FAO-China trust fund through which China will continue to provide experts, technical assistance, training, agricultural inputs and equipment to support food security programmes in Africa and other developing countries. This arrangement is in addition to the recently signed FAO tripartite agreements with the Governments of Chad and Viet Nam in 2010 and between the Governments of China, Liberia and Senegal in 2011, with plans under way to create similar arrangements with the Governments of Argentina, Indonesia and Morocco.

16. Similarly, UNESCO, in collaboration with the Government of Malaysia, has set up the UNESCO-Malaysia Cooperative Trust Fund to enhance South-South cooperation in education and science, particularly benefiting the least developed countries and small island developing States and in support of the Priority Africa agenda of UNESCO, an intersectoral and interdisciplinary strategy that seeks to promote African regional integration among other objectives.

17. Another type of South-South funding mechanism has been developed by the World Food Programme (WFP) through the use of the innovative approach of

twinning, whereby WFP facilitates the matching of in kind contributions from southern countries with financial contributions from donor countries and other flexible multilateral funds to cover transport, handling and related costs associated with its operations. This mechanism has enabled WFP to expand its operations in a number of developing countries across the South as South-South financing grew to 5 per cent of contributions, up from only 0.5 per cent of all contributions in 2007 and 2008.

D. Supporting centres of excellence for South-South cooperation

18. Another key piece of support to a more systematic approach to South-South cooperation is the institutional support and capacity development efforts undertaken by United Nations entities towards the creation or strengthening of South-South networks and centres of excellence in direct response to requests made by Member States in the 2009 Nairobi outcome document. As a result, a number of South-South centres of excellence were launched, strengthened and interlinked during the period under review.

19. Member organizations, including UNCTAD, UNDP, UNESCO, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO) and WFP, played key roles in these institution-building efforts. For example, UNDP was instrumental in creating and strengthening existing global centres to facilitate knowledge exchanges and experience-sharing. These include the International Policy Centre for Inclusive Growth in Brazil, the newly agreed Istanbul International Centre for the Private Sector in Development and the International Centre for Human Development in India, established in March 2012. UNCTAD has continued to support its network of centres of excellence to train scientists and technology experts to transfer knowledge to Africa while UNIDO has been instrumental in developing South-South cooperation centres in China and India that promote industrial development across the South. The work of UNESCO in this area has included plans to launch the International Centre for Biotechnology in Nigeria and the International Centre for South-South Cooperation in Science, Technology and Innovation in Kuala Lumpur, to promote science in countries of the South. Similarly, WFP established the Centre of Excellence against Hunger in collaboration with the Government of Brazil in November 2011, where representatives from 20 countries were trained in the Brazilian experience of sustainable school feeding programmes.

20. In addition to partnership-building initiatives on South-South issues, UNDP continued to integrate South-South cooperation for capacity-building into its country programmes during the period under review. With more than 700 different South-South cooperation activities reported in 2009 and 2010 by more than 135 country offices, UNDP has focused its efforts on knowledge management and the formulation of regional and subregional projects. These activities have taken the form of study visits and tours, workshops, training, sharing of technical expertise, regional projects, joint initiatives and technical cooperation. The range of sectors for South-South cooperation activities as reported by UNDP country offices has covered areas as diverse as governance, energy and the environment, development planning, gender, disaster prevention and crisis management, HIV and AIDS, poverty reduction and public administration.

E. Facilitating South-South networks and networking

21. Apart from systematizing its approaches to South-South cooperation during the biennium, the United Nations system has increased its reliance on information and communications technology (ICT) and the Internet advance developments using South-South mechanisms. This has led to United N tions system support to South-South cooperation in areas of research and data collection and dissemination through the development of various web-based knowledge management platforms and web portals.

22. The reliance on ICT has allowed for freer exchanges of information among more people, easier documentation and more rapid and comprehensive dissemination of best practices and development solutions, with examples found in specialized agencies, funds and programmes across the system, including at UNDP, UNEP, UNICEF and WFP. For example, UNDP launched its teamworks web platform for increased and broadened exchanges among its vast network of development professionals across the globe and the WFP Nutrinet platform connects Governments, international organizations, academic institutions, non-governmental organizations and development professionals across the Latin America and the Caribbean region to facilitate exchanges of relevant information and good practices in policies, programmes and effective nutrition interventions. In the Asia and Pacific region, UNICEF launched its Partnership of Excellence for Pacific Children to facilitate the sharing of up-to-date information on the rights of Pacific Island children and development issues among Governments, non-governmental organizations, academic institutions and other partners to improve the survival, development and protection of children in the region. The UNEP web-based platform documents case studies and stories on South-South cooperation on the environment and provides for exchanges of information related to the environment on available technologies, expertise, methodologies, tools, guidelines, training opportunities and existing networks in countries and regions of the South.

III. Organizational, administrative and financial arrangements of the United Nations Development Programme in support of South-South cooperation

23. In keeping with the Buenos Aires Plan of Action, the Nairobi outcome document of the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation[2] and various other intergovernmental decisions that emphasize the need for strong institutional arrangements in support of South-South cooperation in the United Nations system, the Special Unit for South-South Cooperation within UNDP, through its fourth cooperation framework for South-South cooperation (2008-2011), continued to effectively carry out its mandate as the United Nations focal point and coordinator of South-South cooperation throughout the United Nations system. This includes enabling intergovernmental policymaking processes; brokering the sharing of knowledge; promoting innovative mechanisms and approaches to South-South cooperation; fostering inclusive partnerships; and reporting on progress made in South-South cooperation by Member States and the United Nations system.

24. In addition to its policy, advocacy and system-wide coordination work, the operational support of the Special Unit to Member States and the United Nations

system has been provided mainly through its three-in-one multilateral South-South support architecture: the Global South-South Development Academy, which helps partners to systematically and jointly identify, document and share southern development solutions; the annual Global South-South Development Expo, which has enabled partners to regularly showcase successful and scalable development solutions; and the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange (SS-GATE), which has provided partners, especially private sector partners, with the opportunity to list solutions, match supply and demand and collaborate for scaling up, including through finding financing options.

A. Policy development, research and advocacy

25. Over the two-year reporting period, the Special Unit has continued to respond to the increasing volume of demand for South-South cooperation research and services. This support has taken the form of substantive reports of the Secretary-General on the state of South-South cooperation, both to the General Assembly as a whole and specifically as inputs to the High-level United Nations Conference on South-South Cooperation in 2009. In addition to supplying substantive research for the Conference, the Special Unit also organized and facilitated the event, as called for by the General Assembly in its resolution 64/1, on behalf of the President of the General Assembly and the Administrator of UNDP, with the latter serving as the Secretary-General of the Conference. The outcome document outlined the defining principles and objectives of South-South cooperation among developing countries, while also pointing to the support required of the United Nations system. In particular, it encouraged the Special Unit to support the establishment of closer linkages among institutions and centres of excellence and among regional and subregional economic groupings through its Global South-South Development Academy, Global South-South Development Expo and South-South Global Assets Technology Exchange.

26. The various knowledge products and services produced and offered by the Special Unit over this period, including the *South Report*, have served to influence intergovernmental and inter-agency processes and global dialogue on South-South and development cooperation issues. This is reflected in the inclusion of South-South cooperation in discussions leading up to and inclusive of the Fourth High Level Forum on Aid Effectiveness held at Busan, Republic of Korea, in 2011, the inclusion of South-South cooperation in the Group of Twenty development action plan from 2010, and the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries of 2011, among others. Furthermore, the reports of the Special Unit have been referenced in outside research such as that produced by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development and the Africa Progress Panel.[3] The promotion of the annual United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation by the Special Unit has also increased awareness of the potential contribution of South-South cooperation to the achievement of the internationally agreed development goals, including the Millennium Development Goals.

[3] OECD, *Perspectives on Global Development 2010: Shifting Wealth* (Paris, OECD, 2010) and Africa Progress Panel, *Africa Progress Report 2011: The Transformative Power of Partnerships* (Geneva 2011).

27. In 2010 the Special Unit was called upon to provide policy advice to the expert group working on the report of the Office of the Special Adviser on Africa, *Africa's Cooperation with New and Emerging Development Partners: Options for Africa's Development*. In addition, the Special Unit co-produced the *Creative Economy Report 2010* with UNCTAD, surveying the topic and exploring its role in the development of the South. The Special Unit also sponsored forums for global dialogue on taxation for development and South-South cooperation for developing productive capacities as part of the side events of the Fourth United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries. Furthermore, pursuant to decision 16/1 of the sixteenth session of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, the Special Unit has been in consultation with United Nations inter-agency counterparts and Member States on the preparation of a draft framework of operational guidelines for South-South cooperation to better inform United Nations system members on how to go about their own South-South work, with a view to meeting the needs of Member States at the country, regional and global levels (see SSC/17/3).

28. In its role as system-wide facilitator and coordinator of South-South cooperation for the United Nations, the Special Unit facilitated the sharing of experiences and good practices in South-South cooperation among United Nations agencies by organizing four inter-agency meetings during the reporting period. The United Nations South-South Stakeholders Meeting, held during the Global South-South Development Expo 2011, brought together representatives of more than 14 United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes, who shared the contributions of their respective agencies to South-South cooperation. To facilitate further interaction and the sharing of best practices, the Special Unit launched the web-based UN Entities Space during the Expo, enabling agency partners to upload and share their tools, instruments and strategies for promoting South-South cooperation.

29. Additionally, the Special Unit supported policy coordination and development among Member States and was instrumental in creating a virtual and physical space for national representatives of cooperation agencies and the like to share best practices and lessons learned through the annual meeting of Directors-General held in conjunction with the various Development Expos. In Rome in 2011, more than 61 representatives from 30 countries and 68 representatives from multi-stakeholder and international organizations joined in discussions on the theme of "Effective partnership towards innovative development solutions". These discussions included best practices in South-South and triangular cooperation on critical development issues, public-private partnerships, strengthening financial mechanisms, capacity development, scaling up through South-South and triangular cooperation, and the expected roles of United Nations agencies. The meeting of the Directors-General, jointly sponsored by the Special Unit and the Japan International Cooperation Agency, has been held annually since 2008, with representatives from both developed and developing countries attending. These meetings have resulted in the launch of new initiatives, including the virtual Directors-General Space, sponsored by the Special Unit, for further networking and sharing of best practices.

30. In addition to supporting national Directors-General, the Special Unit has also placed great emphasis on providing direct policy support to southern countries in developing their own South-South units, centres of excellence and strategies for using South-South initiatives towards meeting national and regional development

goals.[4] This work took a number of forms including workshop-based training with more than 70 regional coordination officers, preparation of needs assessments and concept notes to aid countries in designing and devising their own South-South workplans and collaborative meetings and interviews with Government representatives. This work led to the integration of South-South and triangular cooperation into the United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks of six developing countries in Africa.

B. Knowledge mobilization for mutual learning

31. Over the course of the period under review, South-South cooperation as a platform for knowledge-sharing and mutual learning was given renewed emphasis by development practitioners. To capitalize on this increasing demand, the Special Unit has expanded its services through the Global South-South Development Academy not only by identifying, collecting and disseminating southern solutions and best practices but also in its management of the Web of Information for Development roster system.

32. The Academy facilitates the identification of southern development solutions by outlining the processes for improving, documenting and cataloguing solutions through streamlined methodologies and online tools. In this way, it offers virtual support enabling partners to document development solutions, organize peer-review exercises, refine their case studies and incorporate documented solutions into the online solutions bank of the Academy, the solution centre. The solution centre database has on hand 330 peer-reviewed southern development solutions, drawn largely from the 19 volumes of the Special Unit series, *Sharing Innovative Experiences*. The peer review workshops have intensified links and knowledge-sharing among communities of practice. For example, the documentation by the Special Unit and ILO of 18 experiences from countries of the South on social protection floors has contributed significantly to the report that the Advisory Group of ILO issued in collaboration with the World Health Organization within the framework of the Social Protection Floor Initiative adopted by the United Nations System Chief Executives Board for Coordination. Within the Academy, a number of thematic development institutes have been established, including institutes on hydrocarbon management,[5] taxation for development and a South-South community-based development academy.

33. As a critical component of the Academy, the roster system of the Special Unit, the Web of Information for Development, has enabled the creation of more than 100 rosters of experts managed by a variety of partners, including United Nations system members and national cooperation agencies. Currently, the system hosts over 60 active expert rosters able to provide referrals of expertise to promote the use of southern experts in development. Through this platform, more than 4,586 vetted

[4] The Special Unit provided strategic advice to Gabon, Kenya, Rwanda and Sierra Leone in assisting them to create their own national South-South cooperation units and/or programmes. It also assisted Argentina in developing plans for a forthcoming South-South Observatory.

[5] In collaboration with Columbia University, the Special Unit launched its second publication on lessons from the South on the sustainable management of the oil and gas sector, *Getting It Right: Lessons from the South in Managing Hydrocarbon Economies*, which provides practical guidelines and recommendations on a broad range of issues associated with oil and gas management.

experts are available for referrals, covering areas as diverse as governance, gender, HIV and AIDS, evaluation, poverty and the environment, among others. These experts were selected from a pool of more than 11,000 professional profiles that were screened.

34. The Special Unit has continued its work on resourcing and supporting national South-South cooperation focal points drawn from across public, private and civil society sectors spread across three subregional groupings and covering a total of 41 countries. To this end, the Special Unit has developed a multimedia communications strategy incorporating monthly e-newsletters, quarterly magazines and a sister website highlighting southern innovations to address the challenges of development. Some of these communication tools have been picked up by the international press and have continued to expand their readership, with the first issue of *Southern Innovator* magazine reaching more than 5,000 readers since June 2011, for example.

C. Innovation for scaling up impact

35. The annual Global South-South Development Expo, the second pillar of the three-in-one support architecture of the Special Unit, has over the past four years given exposure to over 300 southern development solutions to persistent development challenges from more than 100 countries. Developed as a concrete response to demand by Member States for a results-oriented partnership, the Expo provides a venue for matching development demands and tested solutions. In the recent Expo 2011, more than 100 partnerships and solutions developed by southern countries themselves in response to the challenges of food security and malnutrition were showcased in Rome to an audience of more than 600 members of Governments and United Nations, private sector, civil society and academic partners. The various elements of the Expo, including the Leadership Round Table involving renowned southern development pioneers, the multiple technical solution exchange forums and the annual meeting of Directors-General of national development cooperation agencies serve to display the intellectual leadership of the South in development cooperation, as well as the relevance of existing southern solutions to current pressing development issues. Of particular relevance to solving complex problems facing the South today, one noted solution presented during the 2010 Expo is the programme for South-South cooperation on sustainable development between Benin, Bhutan and Costa Rica. With the help of the Netherlands, the programme is aimed at facilitating the sharing of low-cost renewable technologies to promote increased agricultural productivity and environmental sustainability. In 2011, the joint partnership between the United Nations Foundation and the United States Department of State on the Global Alliance for Clean Cookstoves was recognized for its contribution to saving lives, improving livelihoods, empowering women and combating climate change by creating a thriving global market for clean and efficient household cooking solutions.

36. The Expo emphasizes building effective broad partnerships among United Nations system entities to produce the annual event. Through these partnerships, agencies identify best practices in their area of expertise and mandate, employ cost-sharing funding modalities and provide intellectual leadership for their respective segments of the Expo. Since its inception in 2008 when there were three original United Nations partner agencies, the annual event has grown to include 18 specialized agencies actively contributing to the showcasing of development

solutions, including its hosts, the World Bank in 2009, ILO in 2010 and FAO in 2011.

37. As part of broader efforts to meet the 2015 deadline for the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals, efforts were made over the period under review to scale up the work of the South-South Global Assets and Technology Exchange, the third pillar of the three-in-one support architecture of the Special Unit and a major part of its work to scale up the impact of development. The Exchange has established 38 country centres in 36 developing countries across Africa, Asia and the Middle East — up from 21 at the end of 2009. These country centres help to identify potential southern private and public sector partnerships, facilitating the matching of demand and supply of southern technologies, assets and finance in a secure environment. Efforts are ongoing to continue to expand the number of beneficiary countries of the Exchange beyond even the initial projection of 72 member States with a country centre within their borders. As of 2011, the Exchange had listed 1,408 new projects, matched 516 new projects and witnessed 156 successful transactions. In one such transaction, under its climate change and clean energy technology exchange track, it was able to offset the greenhouse gas emissions of both the seventeenth session of the Conference of the Parties to the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change, held in Durban, South Africa, from 28 November to 9 December 2011, and the United Nations Pavilion at the Shanghai World Expo in 2010.

38. Additionally, the Special Unit has been at the forefront of efforts to enable new forms of development partnership, in particular through its support to the Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund for South-South Cooperation, to the India, Brazil and South Africa Facility for Poverty and Hunger Alleviation (IBSA Fund) and to the Facility/Programme for Capacity Development for Poverty Reduction through South-South and Triangular Cooperation in Education, Science and Technology newly established by the Republic of Korea. With more than 14 projects and activities in 11 countries and territories, including five least developed countries, the IBSA Fund is brokering a new type of multilateral South-South development assistance that emphasizes national ownership, the use of national capacities and a focus on partnership with United Nations and civil society partners to improve the impact of development initiatives on human welfare. In managing the Fund, the Special Unit has seen the total number of projects, which range from food security to job creation, village electrification and waste management, grow dramatically through the provision of its management services, as well as through assistance given to further institutionalize the fund and its procedures. The newly launched fund sponsored by the Republic of Korea is set to share the development experience and know-how of the country in education, science and technology with developing countries and to facilitate mutual learning among developing countries. The China Global South-South Development Centre was established in 2009 by the Government of China and the Special Unit through contributions by China to the United Nations Fund for South-South Cooperation. The Centre supports a large network of centres of excellence in China enabling them to provide better support to least developed countries. Among the activities in its first years of operations, it has promoted exchanges in dairy technology with Kenya and Rwanda, supported the sixth China New Energy International Forum on solar and wind energy with participants from 16 southern countries, and established a Sino-Kenyan demonstration project on a solar photovoltaic system and a solar water heating system benefiting 300 households in Kenya.

39. The Special Unit has also been involved in creating and piloting innovative South-South projects with the support of Japan through cost sharing. These include projects on food security, disaster risk management and private sector development. In the area of food security, efforts are under way to improve rice seed varieties and increase rice production in Liberia using the cultivar newrice for Africa. Cooperation on disaster risk management and climate change, connecting Pacific and Caribbean small island developing States, has been supported, creating systematic dialogue and partnerships between institutions across regions. In strengthening small and medium-sized enterprise development in Asia through support to the Technonet Asia initiative, the project brought together participants from 16 countries across the region for knowledge-sharing and networking. As a corollary to these efforts, the Special Unit has also been actively collecting and documenting best practices in triangular cooperation.

D. Administrative and financial support

40. Overall, UNDP continues to provide most of the financial support for the Special Unit, including staffing and core resources, enabling it to perform its mandated functions in serving as the full secretariat for the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation, organizing the annual United Nations Day for South-South Cooperation, supporting regional and interregional South-South cooperation through the regional service centres in Bangkok and Johannesburg, South Africa, and providing policy support and other services to the United Nations system through its three-in-one architecture. In providing core funding, UNDP originally committed $4.5 million annually under the fourth cooperation framework for South-South cooperation. However, in 2011 owing to budget cuts across the board as donor giving decreased in light of the global financial crisis, this amount decreased to $3.76 million. In spite of these budget cuts, the Special Unit was able to mobilize $18.2 million in non-core funding resources in the period 2009-2011. In addition to the core funding specifically channelled through the Special Unit, UNDP has continued to integrate and thus fund South-South cooperation in its activities and programmes at headquarters, in the regions and in country offices.

Core and non-core funding, 2009-2011

(Thousands of United States dollars)

	Income			
Fund	*2009*	*2010*	*2011*	*Total*
Core funds	4 500.0	4 500.0	3 760.0	12 760.0
Cost sharing	280.1	1 061.0	32.1	1 373.2
IBSA Trust Fund	3 000.0	3 000.0	3 128.8	9 128.8
Fund for South-South Cooperation	1 689.4	3 708.5	1 871.7	7 269.6
Perez-Guerrero Trust Fund	179.6	89.8	104.1	373.5
Total core	**4 500.0**	**4 500.0**	**3 760.0**	**12 760.0**
Total non-core	**5 149.2**	**7 859.3**	**5 136.6**	**18 145.1**
Total	**9 649.2**	**12 359.3**	**8 896.6**	**30 905.1**

IV. Conclusions and recommendations

41. A number of recent reviews confirm that United Nations specialized agencies, funds and programmes are mainstreaming South-South cooperation in their policies and programmes as the Revised Guidelines for the Review of Policies and Procedures concerning Technical Cooperation among Developing Countries (TCDC/13/3) require. Moreover, the prioritization of knowledge-sharing and knowledge management in South-South development strategies and programmes enacted by United Nations system members is progressing apace. Additionally, in order to scale up South-South exchanges, agencies are involved in more innovative approaches to resource mobilization, networking and the establishment and strengthening of southern centres of excellence, as urged in the Nairobi outcome document. The report also shows the support for South-South cooperation provided by the Special Unit for South-South cooperation to Member States and the United Nations system in these same three areas of policy support, knowledge exchange and scaling up.

42. In addition to its accomplishments in mainstreaming South-South cooperation through both its Strategic Plan 2008-2011 and within its own global, regional and country programmes, UNDP has also provided the Special Unit with the space and means necessary to perform its mandated functions. Accordingly, the Special Unit has provided the United Nations system, Member States, the private sector and non-governmental development actors with the required space and support architecture to form South-South and triangular cooperation partnerships for sharing and exchanging successful and scalable development solutions towards the achievement of the Millennium Development Goals and other internationally agreed development goals.

43. While significant strides have been made in bringing United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies together in more coordinated and coherent approaches to South-South cooperation, there remains room for improvement, as noted by the Joint Inspection Unit review of United Nations support to South-South and triangular cooperation (JIU/REP/2011/3). The recently designed strategies, programming policies and guidance tools are valuable instruments that can and should serve to influence and support all United Nations entities in their own development of similar tools. However, more needs to be done to further inter-agency collaboration on the preparation of policy and programming tools specific to each agency, building on the inter-agency forums organized for South-South cooperation focal points by the Special Unit. These valuable interactions offer potential for greater coordination and coherent support for South-South cooperation efforts by Member States. To this end, United Nations programmes, funds and specialized agencies should commit greater time and resources to supporting these exchanges, including support to greater use of the newly available Stakeholders Workspace, offering opportunities for richer virtual interactions and providing a databank for consolidating the various strategies, policies, good practices and guidance tools on South-South cooperation by United Nations system members for system-wide peer learning and adaptation.

44. The proliferation of South-South cooperation programmes and activities across the United Nations system, as outlined in the report, points to the need to move from fragmented and ad hoc reporting to more systematic, standard and comprehensive reporting mechanisms. The need for improved quality of data and analysis is also

apparent in the role that this information plays in informing the decision-making processes of Member States. In particular, in the planning, programming, reporting and monitoring of South-South cooperation activities, United Nations system organizations, including regional commissions, should consider the key catalytic actions and performance indicators as outlined in the framework of operational guidelines on South-South cooperation (SSC/17/3) that has been developed in response to decision 16/1 of the High-level Committee on South-South Cooperation.

45. The growing emphasis on partnering with developing countries to establish and/or strengthen southern centres of excellence, particularly in light of their regional connections, reflects the relevance of the Nairobi outcome document to the work of United Nations organizations and agencies. As the wealth of expertise found throughout the South continues to grow, opportunities for this knowledge and wisdom to be shared in a multilateral context must expand, which emphasizes the necessary role of the United Nations system. Identifying, documenting, collecting and disseminating southern expertise, development solutions and best practices are integral to the scaling up of the impact of South-South development cooperation and can best be accomplished through multilateral means.

46. As a relevant trend, the emphasis on web-based communications and interaction platforms is encouraging, especially in terms of its potential for cost cutting in an era of declining resources. However, the need for face-to-face interactions and for valuing interpersonal communication in its most traditional sense is a trait that has particular meaning for peoples of the South. Member States should use this opportunity to encourage the United Nations system not to forgo face-to-face interactions for the sake of efficiency when effectiveness might ultimately be lost without the proper context provided by interpersonal interactions.

47. Furthermore, as demands for support for South-South interactions increase, there remain concerns regarding the availability of funds for these activities, particularly since they fall outside most budgets agreed upon between the United Nations system and programme countries. To this end, in preparing United Nations Development Assistance Frameworks and other programming frameworks and agreements, Member States and United Nations system partners might choose to include South-South cooperation as part of the agreed frameworks and to include a budget line or lines for funding projects and programmes, especially those that are cross-border in focus and impact. This might require more intensive negotiations on a regional basis, but given the commitments of the Nairobi outcome document to United Nations system support for regional coordination mechanisms, this proposal should provide an appropriate means of entry for these institutions to be involved in regional development initiatives that are aligned with existing negotiated frameworks and programmes.